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Soviet Shipping Organizations Active in Belgian Trade

The organization in the Soviet government responsible for merchant shipping is the all-union Ministry of the Maritime Fleet with headquarters in Moscow. Subordinate to the Ministry are 15 steamship companies that operate vessels in international trade. At least four of these companies operate cargo liner services that involve regular calls in Antwerp.

The Soviet steamship companies whose cargo liners visit Antwerp are listed below with descriptions of their Belgian services:

1. Baltic Steamship Company (Leningrad)
 - a. Baltic Sea, Western Europe/Australia
 - b. Baltic Sea, Western Europe/New Zealand
 - c. Baltic Sea, Western Europe/East Coast of South America (a joint service with Polish and East German steamship companies called "The Baltamerica Line")
2. Latvian Steamship Company (Riga)

Baltic/Antwerp (a joint operation with the Belgian Baltic Lines, N.V. of Antwerp)
3. Murmansk Arctic Steamship Company (Murmansk)

Western Europe/Eastern Canada
4. Caspian Steamship Company (Baku)

Iran (Caspian Sea)/Baltic Sea, Western Europe (via the Volga River and the Volga-Baltic Waterway)

None of the five Soviet steamship companies in the Black Sea area (Black Sea, Novorossiysk, Azov, Georgian, and Danube) provides liner service to Belgium.

In addition to the steamship companies whose vessels make frequent visits to Belgian ports, two organizations attached to the Ministry, Sovfracht and Sovinflot, are also involved in Belgian shipping affairs. Sovfracht was set up before World War II. Its responsibilities include the chartering of foreign ships and the booking of space on foreign cargo liners for Soviet shippers (mostly organizations under the Ministry of Foreign Trade) and the chartering out of Soviet ships and the soliciting of space bookings on Soviet liners by foreign shippers. (See attachment 1). In February 1968, Mr. V. Ivanov was appointed as the Belgian representative of Sovfracht in Antwerp. He may have been the first individual to hold this position.

Sovinflot, which dates back only to March 1969, is responsible for Ministry relations with the agencies that represent Soviet ships and steamship companies in foreign ports and, in addition, provides agency services for foreign ships when they visit Soviet ports. It has absorbed Inflot, the agency that has handled foreign ships in Soviet ports for many years. Sovinflot came into being at about the same time the USSR began replacing local firms that had previously represented Soviet ships in key world ports with joint stock firms in which the Ministry plays a major role. The Transworld Marine

Agency in Antwerp is an example. Seventy-five percent of the stock in this firm is held by Soviet organizations including Sovinflot, Sovfracht, and three of the four steamship companies with liner services to Antwerp. The remaining stock is in Belgian hands. This new company which employs a number of Soviet nationals is believed to be controlled by the Ministry through Sovinflot. (See attachments 2 and 3). It is not known what relationship, if any, exists between the Soviet Embassy in Brussels and Transworld.

Soyuzvneshttrans is another organization involved in the overseas activities of the Soviet merchant fleet. Unlike the other Soviet shipping organizations discussed thus far, it is subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. Its chief responsibility is the forwarding of foreign trade cargoes, which entails the movement of exports to the appropriate seaports or border points and the movement of imports in the reverse direction. In this role it must deal with both import and export organizations under the Ministry of Foreign Trade and with Sovfracht (in the case of seaborne trade) which represents the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet as well as foreign carriers. It does not function outside the country in the way Sovfracht and Sovinflot do.

The contraction "Morflot" stands for maritime fleet and may be a telegraphic address for the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet. The significance of "Morfracht", which is probably a contraction for maritime chartering, is not known.

РАСЧЕТЫ В ПОРТАХ

ВНЕШНЕТОРГОВЫЕ
РАСЧЕТЫ

СССР • 1968

Расчеты с инофирмами в портах, производимые конторами В/О «Союзвнештранс» по поручению всесоюзных объединений, расширяются. Сейчас они охватили уже 75% грузов. Время предъявления счетов инофирмам сократилось на 7—10 дней, что ускорило получение выручки, сократило расходы на банковские ссуды. Ускорила оборачиваемость валютных средств. Возросший объем инорасчетов в портовых конторах выполнен без увеличения штатов, за исключением единичных случаев.

Основная масса коммерческих и товаросопроводительных документов готовится заблаговременно, до окончания погрузки судна. Это делается на основании поручений или копий контрактов, получаемых от внешнеторговых организаций. Конторы предварительно готовят необходимое количество спецификаций, счетов, сертификаты происхождения товара, сертификаты качества, веса, страховые полисы и другие документы. Так, в документ предварительно вносятся номер счета, название и адрес фирмы, пункт или порт отправления—назначения; название судна, на котором отправляется груз, номер контракта, аккредитива, название банка, открывшего аккредитив, название отгружаемого товара, цена. После того, как заканчивается погрузка товара и получен подписанный капитаном коносамент с фактическим указанием количества погруженного товара, конторы быстро и окончательно оформляют счет с помощью счетно-вычислительной или фактурной машины.

После погрузки судна коммерческие и товаросопроводительные документы сдаются в отделение Госбанка. Расчеты по генеральным грузам происходят на 3—4 день. По массовым и навалочным грузам документы изготавливаются и сдаются в отделение Госбанка или Внешторгбанка в день окончания погрузки судна.

Для ускорения процесса изготовления документов на генеральные грузы конторы Союзвнештранса требуют от управлений портов выдачи коносаментов на каждую партию товара, не дожидаясь окончания погрузки судна в целом. На основании этого первичного и основного транспортного документа конторы готовят счет-фактуру и всю остальную коммерческую и товаросопроводительную документацию и сдают ее в отделение Госбанка еще до выхода судна в рейс. В ряде случаев для ускорения расчетов конторы Союзвнештранса в Риге, Ленинграде, Одессе и других портовых городах таким же образом заготавливают резервное количество бланков для запланированных отгрузок. Впоследствии в них вписываются только фактические данные об отгрузке товара, отправленного на том или ином судне. Предварительное изготовление документов облегчается специализацией наших морских торговых портов по отдельным видам товара и странам.

Практика работы контор В/О «Союзвнештранс» показала, что наиболее целесообразной организационной формой для производства инорасчетов, является специально созданная для этой цели инорасчетная группа, состоящая из инокорреспондентов и бухгалтеров. При такой организации дела всегда возможны взаимозаменяемость и взаимная помощь.

За последние месяцы внешнеторговые организации, поручавшие производить конторам Союзвнештранса инорасчеты, почти не имели каких-либо претензий на неправильное или несвоевременное составление коммерческих и других товаросопроводительных документов. Более того, отдельные объединения предлагают сейчас передать портовым конторам также и расчеты с инофирмами, платежи которых предусмотрены долгосрочными кредитами или произведены авансом.

В целях дальнейшего расширения и усовершенствования расчетной работы в портах необходимо, на наш взгляд, решить ряд организационных вопросов. Практика показала, что работники, занимающиеся этим, должны знать иностранные языки, формы международных расчетов, условия платежей, применяемых нашими внешнеторговыми организациями, валюту стран, номенклатуру товаров, уметь работать на счетно-вычислительных и пишущих машинках и т. д. Подготовку таких кадров, нам кажется, целесообразно проводить централизованно.

П. Мокрецов

SUPPLIES AND BUNKERS DEPARTMENT -- performs directly or through its branches and subsidiaries broker functions in arranging supplies of bunkers and lubricating oils for Soviet flag vessels at foreign ports as well as for foreign flag vessels at U.S.S.R. ports.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT -- handles claims, arbitration and court cases abroad on behalf and at the request of Soviet Owners; provides legal assistance to foreign flag vessels and their Owners in the U.S.S.R.

COMMERCIAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT -- deals with all matters of commercial information and advertising within the competence of the company.

HEAD OFFICE

Postal address:
1/4, ul. Zhdanova,
Moscow K-25,
U.S.S.R.
Telephone: 296-50-32,
Cable address: Sovinfliot Moscow
Telex: 217 (answer back «Soviracht two»)

In March 1969 a new company -- V/O «Sovinfliot» -- was set up in Moscow.

The main task of V/O «Sovinfliot» is to improve services foreign flag vessels calling at U.S.S.R. ports as well as to Soviet flag vessels calling at foreign ports.

V/O «Sovinfliot» through its «Infliot» branch offices in Soviet ports renders assistance to foreign ship Masters and Owners in carrying out all port formalities, arranging ship repairs, providing vessels with bunkers, shiphandler and other supplies.

V/O «Sovinfliot» also acts as general shipping agent for Soviet Owner companies in arranging agency, stevedoring and other services of Soviet vessels abroad and maintains in this sphere wide business relations with foreign firms all over the world.

The President of V/O «Sovinfliot» is Mr. G. A. Maslov.

DEPARTMENTS

AGENCY DEPARTMENT FOR EUROPE & AMERICA -- business relations with and supervision of activities of Soviet vessels' agents and stevedores in ports of Europe and America.

AGENCY DEPARTMENT FOR ASIA & AFRICA -- business relations with and supervision of activities of Soviet Owners' agents and stevedores in ports of Asia and Africa.

FOREIGN COMPANIES DEPARTMENT -- coordinates activities of foreign shipping agency companies with Soviet interest.

«INFLOT» AGENCIES DEPARTMENT -- directs the work of all «Infliot» branch offices in Soviet ports.

TRANSPORTATION

REGULATIONS OF ALL-UNION ASSOCIATION SOVINFLLOT

[Regulations; Moscow, Morskoy Flot, Russian, No 6, 1970, p 79]

I. General Positions

1. The All-Union association for servicing of the Soviet and foreign fleet -- the V/O [Vsesoyuznoye ob'yedineniye; All-Union association] Sovinflot was created for representation of Soviet ships in foreign countries and of foreign ships in the USSR, and also for performance of other functions of Soviet and foreign ship owners in connection with protecting their commercial and legal interests, both in the USSR and abroad.

2. Sovinflot is a state organization, financed by the government. It has an independent balance, is a legal entity, and operates on the basis of present regulations.

3. Sovinflot is responsible only for its own assets, upon which, according to Soviet law, claims can be made.

Sovinflot is not responsible to government and other Soviet organizations, enterprises, and institutions, as the government and other Soviet organizations, enterprises, and institutions are not responsible to Sovinflot.

4. Sovinflot is located in Moscow.

5. Sovinflot possesses a round seal with a representation of its title.

II. Functions

6. In order to execute its responsibilities Sovinflot will:

a) organize representation, stevedore, and other services for Soviet ships, and will also provide them with fuel and other forms of supplies abroad;

aff:
and

b) perform operations in connection with representation and fuel and other forms of supply for foreign ships in the USSR;

c) investigate taxes, tariffs and customs in effect in foreign ports and take measures to ensure their most advantageous application to Soviet ships;

d) perform the responsibilities of Soviet and foreign ship owners in connection with protecting their commercial and legal interests in the USSR and abroad.

III. The Powers of V/O Sovinplot

7. For performance of the functions stated in paragraph 6 of these regulations, Sovinplot is empowered in the established legal order to:

a) make any type of agreement and undertake other legal actions, including contracts, perform credit and exchange operations with institutions, enterprises, organizations, companies, and physical entities in the USSR and abroad, sue and respond in judgment and arbitration;

b) organize affiliates, bureaus, representatives and agencies, both in the USSR and abroad;

c) participate in any type of union, association, conference, society and organization corresponding to the jurisdiction of the association, operating both in the USSR and abroad.

IV. Finances

8. Sovinplot is appropriated the sum of 1 million rubles.

V. Management of Association

9. The All-Union Association Sovinplot will be managed by the chairman of the union and his deputies, designated in the prescribed order.

Distribution of responsibilities among the chairman and his deputies will be determined by the chairman of Sovinplot.

10. The chairman of Sovinplot will manage all matters and assets of the association, execute, in the name of the union, all functions invested in Sovinplot, accomplish the required transactions and actions and communicate directly with all enterprises, organizations, institutions, companies, and persons.

11. Transactions in foreign trade, invested in Sovinplot in Moscow, will be signed by two persons, one of which is the chairman of the association or his deputy, and the other, a person with power of attorney to sign foreign trade transactions, signed by the chairman of Sovinplot.

All foreign trade transactions entered into by Sovinplot or its affiliations, and all acts taken to acquire, dispose of, and lease assets, and exchanges and other financial actions undertaken by the association outside of Moscow (both in the USSR and abroad), must be signed by two persons with power of attorney to sign for the chairman of Sovinplot.

VI. Accounts and Distribution of Profit

12. The fiscal year of Sovinplot is established as 1 January through 31 December of the calendar year.

13. The accounts of Sovinplot are maintained and audited in accordance with prescribed law.

14. The profits of Sovinplot will be distributed in accordance with prescribed law.

VII. Liquidation

15. Sovinplot can be liquidated in accordance with prescribed law.

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CSO: 1823-W

DDI-2683-70

19 November 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief,

SUBJECT : Research on Soviet Maritime Organizations
and Agencies

1. Pursuant to a conversation with OER, it is requested that background material on various aspects of the Soviet maritime organizations and agencies be made available to us for use as operational support material. Specifically, we would like information on the following:

- a. Shipping: A list of various Soviet shipping lines in the Black Sea, Baltic Sea and Arctic Sea which have a relationship with Belgium. The organization(s) to which these lines are subordinate and the manner in which their activities are coordinated. The degree of independence they enjoy vis-a-vis other lines and Soviet international trade organizations.
- b. Allied organizations: The organizations/agencies primarily concerned with foreign trade and shipping, i.e., MORFLOT, MORFRACHT, SOVFRACHT, SOVINFLLOT, SOYUZNESHTRANS, etc. Their individual responsibilities and authority. Their subordination. The authority that the local Soviet Embassy has over their representatives and activities; responsibilities vis-a-vis the Soviet import/export organizations which represent the individual industrial sectors of the USSR, such as oil, machinery, lumber, etc.

2. We will appreciate receipt of this material by 4 December 1970.